# CHAPTER 14 Canadian Identity

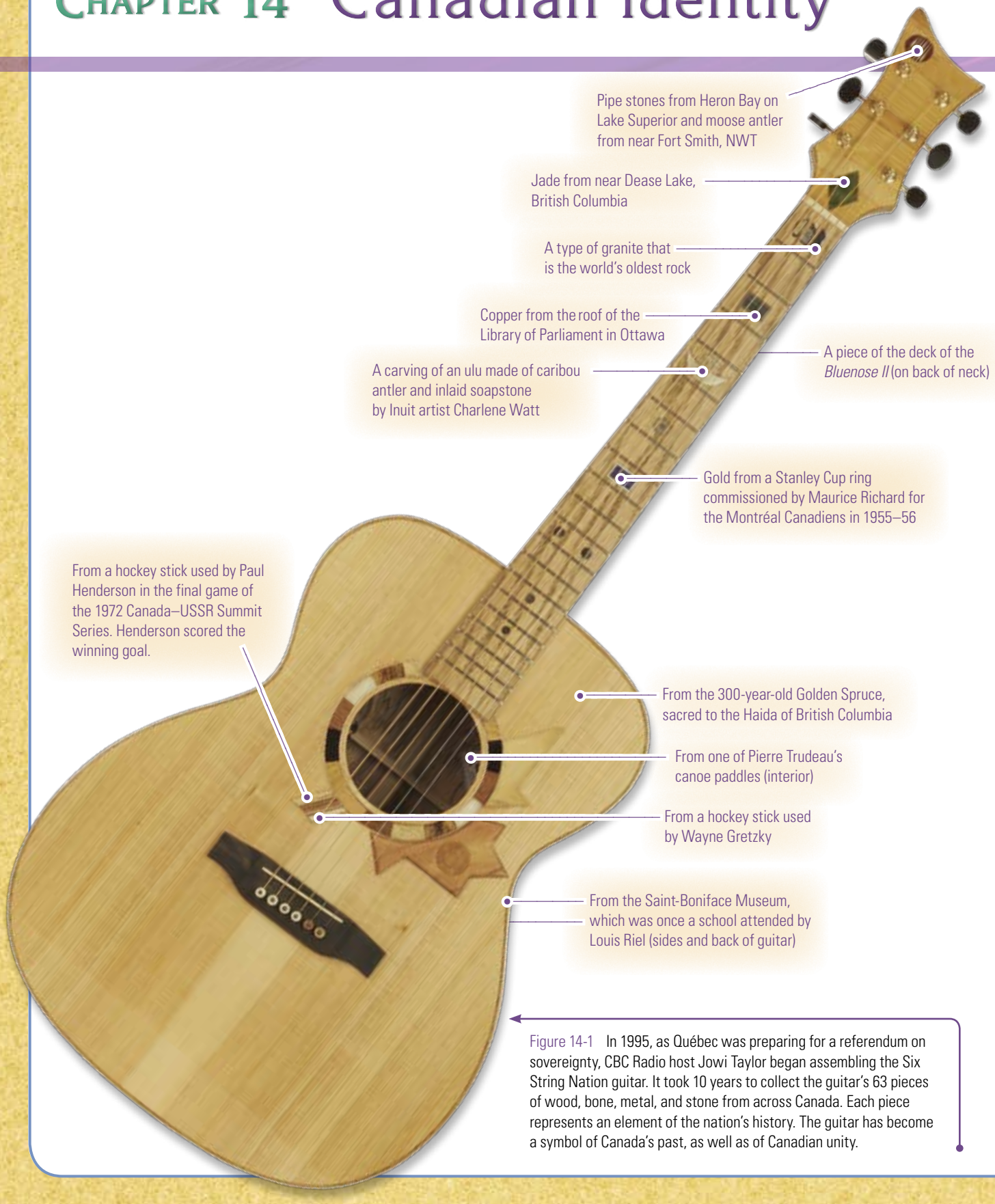

Pipe stones from Heron Bay on Lake Superior and moose antler from near Fort Smith, NWT
Jade from near Dease Lake, British Columbia
A type of granite that is the world's oldest rock
Copper from the roof of the Library of Parliament in Ottawa
A piece of the deck of the *Bluenose II* (on back of neck)
A carving of an ulu made of caribou antler and inlaid soapstone by Inuit artist Charlene Watt
Gold from a Stanley Cup ring commissioned by Maurice Richard for the Montréal Canadiens in 1955–56
From a hockey stick used by Paul Henderson in the final game of the 1972 Canada–USSR Summit Series. Henderson scored the winning goal.
From the 300-year-old Golden Spruce, sacred to the Haida of British Columbia
From one of Pierre Trudeau's canoe paddles (interior)
From a hockey stick used by Wayne Gretzky
From the Saint-Boniface Museum, which was once a school attended by Louis Riel (sides and back of guitar)

Figure 14-1 In 1995, as Québec was preparing for a referendum on sovereignty, CBC Radio host Jowi Taylor began assembling the Six String Nation guitar. It took 10 years to collect the guitar's 63 pieces of wood, bone, metal, and stone from across Canada. Each piece represents an element of the nation's history. The guitar has become a symbol of Canada's past, as well as of Canadian unity.

## CHAPTER ISSUE

**To what extent have attempts to promote national identity been successful?**

WOOD FROM A TREE revered by the Haida of British Columbia, gold from a Stanley Cup ring, and a chip off the oldest kind of rock in the world are all part of the Six String Nation guitar, which was unveiled to audiences across Canada in 2006. Since then, thousands of people have been photographed holding the guitar at festivals, concerts, schools, and other events. And in February 2008, the instrument received its official nickname — Voyageur.

When CBC Radio host Jowi Taylor started the project, his goal was to portray and promote Canada's national identity. To do this, he collected elements that he believes represent what it is to be Canadian.

Creating a national symbol is much like creating a brand with a name people recognize instantly. It announces who Canadians believe they are, how they want to be perceived, and what it means to be part of Canada.

Examine the photograph of the guitar on the previous page, then respond to the following questions:

- Why might the nickname "Voyageur" have been chosen for the guitar?
- Are there any pieces you do not recognize? If so, does this make these pieces less relevant or significant?
- Would a non-Canadian recognize the elements as symbols of Canada?
- If you were choosing pieces for the guitar, what would you pick?

**KEY TERMS**

**institution**

### LOOKING AHEAD

In this chapter, you will develop responses to the following questions as you explore the extent to which attempts to promote national identity have been successful:

- How have symbols and myths been used to promote a national identity?
- How have institutions been used to promote a national identity in Canada?
- How can government programs and initiatives be used to promote a national identity?
- How can individuals promote a national identity?

## My Journal on Nationalism

Using words or images — or both — express your current point of view on the Canadian national identity. Review previous journal entries and identify two or three ideas that have contributed to your current view. Date your ideas and keep them in the journal, notebook, learning log, portfolio, or computer file you are keeping as you progress through this final related issue.

# How have symbols and myths been used to promote a national identity?

**Web Connection**

To find our more about Canada's national symbols, go to this web site and follow the links.

www.ExploringNationalism.ca

When you created a coat of arms in response to the challenge for Related Issue 1, you chose symbols that represented how your understandings of nation shape — and are shaped by — your identity. In similar ways, people and governments often use symbols to portray what they think is important about their country's history, nationhood, and role in the world.

The beaver, for example, is Canada's national animal. As a symbol, it appears on the five-cent piece to represent Canada's history, as well as qualities people have come to associate with Canada and Canadians. And the loon is the source of the name "loonie," the nickname for Canada's $1 coin.

If you were asked to name other animals and birds to represent Canada's national identity, which would you choose? Explain your response.

Just as symbols can portray a nation's identity, so can myths. Many cultures are founded on a creation myth — a story that relates how a place, a city, or a nation and its people came into being. These myths provided ancient peoples with a foundation for their culture, a justification for laws, and unifying stories that all members could claim as their own.

Today, people also turn to myths as a force that unifies and promotes national identity. National myths are stories that promote national values and perspectives. They can include ancient myths, such as stories of the Greek gods of Mount Olympus, and ancient religious texts, such as the Hindu epic poem *Ramayana*, as well as more recent stories. They can also include versions of historical events and personalities, such as stories of early voyageurs canoeing westward, the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and the War of 1812 — which Canadians consider a triumph over American invaders and Americans view as their victory.

Many people suggest that the meaning of many of Canada's myths and symbols is to foster pride in the idea that Canadians persevered and overcame obstacles and hardships. As a result, Canadians are a people who are hardworking, ingenious, and determined.

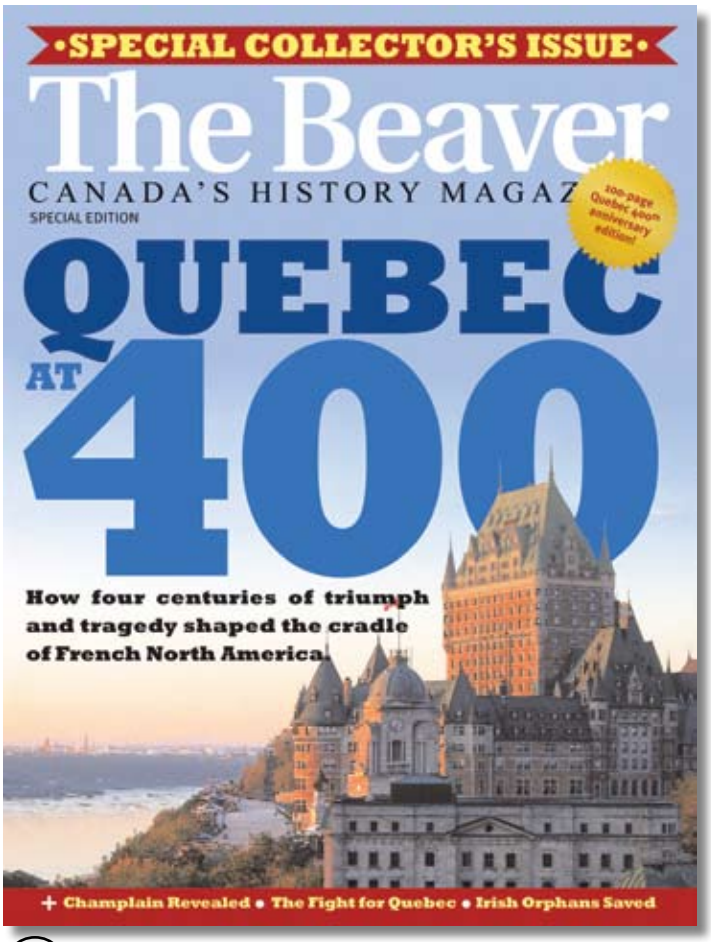

•SPECIAL COLLECTOR'S ISSUE•
The Beaver
CANADA'S HISTORY MAGAZ
SPECIAL EDITION
QUEBEC AT 400
How four centuries of triumph and tragedy shaped the cradle of French North America
+ Champlain Revealed • The Fight for Quebec • Irish Orphans Saved

Figure 14-2 Canada's National History Society named its magazine after the beaver, a Canadian national symbol. The beaver provides a link to Canada's fur-trading past and symbolizes qualities that many Canadians take pride in. The cover shown was for a special 2008 edition. The loon and its haunting cry are associated with northern lakes and isolation, and this bird has come to symbolize Canada as the figure on its $1 coin. But when so many Canadians live in urban areas, are these symbols still valid?

## Using National Symbols to Promote Canadian Identity

People in Canada and around the world associate a number of symbols with Canada: the Rocky Mountains, hockey, the Canada goose, and the maple leaf. When a symbol triggers an association — the maple leaf means Canada — then it is successful. Sometimes, however, symbols succeed in more limited ways. The loon, for example, is not widely known as a symbol of Canada, and the Canada goose can be considered a nuisance.

With a partner, list three other symbols of Canada. What do they tell people about the country? Do the symbols you chose accurately represent a Canadian national identity? What aspects of a Canadian national identity are not included in these symbols?

The great passenger trains were a symbol — still are, years after their demise — and symbols do not operate on the level of logic, but of emotion.

— *Peter C. Newman, in* The Canadian Revolution: From Deference to Defiance, *1996*

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

# Jowi Taylor and George Rizsanyi
## The Six String Nation Guitar

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

In 1995, just before the Québec referendum on separation, broadcaster Jowi Taylor decided to promote national unity by creating a symbol of Canada's past and diversity. For 10 years, he worked on the Six String Nation guitar.

Taylor told CBC TV what happened as he began criss-crossing Canada to assemble the elements of the guitar: "Then began a journey that took us to Haida Gwaii, and took us across the country and got a lot of people talking to us with their stories, and [the guitar] became a talking stick for the country."

The guitar includes wood from Pierre Trudeau's canoe paddle, the deck of the *Bluenose II*, Wayne Gretzky's hockey stick, the homes of Alberta cowboy John Ware and basketball inventor James Naismith, the first Ukrainian Orthodox church in Canada, a Saskatchewan grain elevator, and the Saint-Boniface Museum, which was once a convent where Louis Riel went to school.

It also includes a piece of stone from a memorial to Almighty Voice, the Cree leader who led the last armed resistance to European settlement on the Prairies, and a piece of mammoth ivory collected by Sonny MacDonald, a Chipewyan Dene from Forth Smith in the Northwest Territories.

Figure 14-3 Jowi Taylor (left) and Canadian rocker Colin James checked out the Six String Nation guitar before it was played for the first time on Canada Day, 2006. Has this guitar succeeded in becoming a symbol of Canada?

One piece of the guitar is particularly meaningful to guitar maker George Rizsanyi — an inside strut made from a fragment of Pier 21 in Halifax, where he and his family, like many others, had landed in Canada as immigrants.

Rizsanyi believes that the voices of each story in the guitar will combine when it is played, and he hopes this will give Canadians a sense of the richness of their own history. "They will recognize how deep the culture and history of Canada . . . how colourful it is, that we should be proud as Canadians," he told CBC TV.

### Explorations

1. Describe how the Six String Nation guitar tries to unite various aspects of Canada. Do you think it succeeds in helping Canadians view themselves as a nation? Explain your judgments.
2. Should this guitar be promoted as a national symbol? How would you suggest doing this?

## Using National Myths to Promote Canadian Identity

**CheckBack**

You read about Ernest Renan's understanding of nation in Chapter 1.

According to the French political thinker Ernest Renan, a nation is unified by two things: shared memories of the past and its people's consent in the present — their desire to live together and affirm their heritage. Shared memories of a common history help unite peoples, but peoples also select the myths they want included in their national memory. An early chapter of Canada's national myth, for example, tells the story of mostly European pioneers who triumphed over nature. The government used this story to create symbols and advertising that attracted settlers to Canada. But in the 21st century, the reality is that more than 80 per cent of Canadians live in urban areas and few live completely off the land.

Who is left out of the myth of the "rugged Canadian" triumphing over nature?

*Can Canada continue to call itself a nation of peacekeepers if its forces are small and scattered around the world?*

The image of Canadians as peacekeepers is more recent. Although many Canadians, as well as members of the international community, view Canada as a nation of peacekeepers, the numbers tell a different story. In 1991, Canada contributed more than 10 per cent of all UN peacekeeping forces. Sixteen years later, this contribution amounted to less than 0.1 per cent.

Some people believe that as long as myths serve a valid purpose, such as promoting national unity, facts are not important. But others say that national myths may sometimes be based on lies that promote the dominance of one social group over another.

Legends are what you tell yourself when you don't know your own history. It's cozy and cuddly, politically inoffensive, and reinforces the hegemony [domination] of the ruling class.

*— John Fitzgerald, Newfoundland historian, quoted in* The Next Canada *by Myrna Kostash, 2000*

Canadian political scientist Arash Abizadeh summed up this debate in an article in the *Journal of Political Philosophy*. "Against the charge that identity-grounding myths are simply lies and fabrications that represent some particular groups' will to power, others have argued that it is a mistake to understand national histories as a set of truth claims in the fashion of the academic historian," Abizadeh wrote. "Rather, they should be seen as something closer to stories . . . National myths are not lies and fabrications; they are inspiring narratives, stemming from human imagination, in which we tell ourselves who we are or want to be."

### Reflect and Respond

Look around your school for images, symbols, and stories that create a sense of group identity and belonging. What, for example, does your school crest or logo represent? Did someone famous attend your school? Are stories about students' achievements in sports or the arts highlighted? What feelings do these images, symbols, and stories inspire in you? Explain your response.

Then examine some Canadian bills. What symbols are used on the $5 bill? On the $10 bill? On the $20 bill? What stories or myths about Canada do they suggest? What might these images tell people in other countries about Canada's national myths?

# How have institutions been used to promote a national identity in Canada?

An **institution** is an organization established for and united by a specific purpose — and institutions often use national symbols and stories in a variety of ways to define an identity and promote a sense of belonging.

The activities of various institutions often overlap — and their mission may not be restricted to a single field. Governments, organizations, communities, and individuals may operate — and co-operate in funding — institutions that provide services such as social assistance, education, and cultural events. Public art galleries and museums may be operated by national, provincial, or local governments, often to display national or regional treasures and convey messages about national and regional culture.

If you wanted to tell others about your community or what makes your province unique, what would you say? How would you spread your message?

## Cultural Institutions

Some cultural institutions honour elements of Canada's heritage and history as a foundation of national identity. The Monarchist League, for example, celebrates Canada's British connection and the country's links to the British crown.

Read Queen Elizabeth II's words in "Voices." Do you agree with the Monarchist League's celebration of Canada's links with the British monarch?

Art galleries such as the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa often display Canadian art that is the source of strong national symbols. These include paintings by Cornelius Krieghoff, Emily Carr, and members of the Group of Seven. Museums may also display objects from the nation's past that express — and occasionally challenge — people's sense of belonging. The Glenbow Museum in Calgary, for example, has mounted a permanent and online exhibit called Mavericks: An Incorrigible History of Alberta. The publicity for this exhibit says, "Alberta was shaped by Mavericks — men and women who were adventurous, hard-working, and spirited."

What do you think the Glenbow Museum wants visitors to think about when they view Mavericks? How do you think exhibits like Mavericks might affect Albertans' sense of identity?

Other institutions may help athletes, sometimes by sending them to represent Canada at national and international competitions. And still others try to preserve and promote Aboriginal languages, French, and heritage languages.

### Voices

During a previous visit 32 years ago I said that "I want the Crown in Canada to represent everything that is best and most admired in the Canadian ideal. I will continue to do my best to make it so during my lifetime, and I hope you will all continue to give me your help in this task." I would like to repeat those words today as, together, we continue to build a country that remains the envy of the world.

*— Queen Elizabeth II, in an address to the Alberta legislature, 2005*

### Web Connection

To view the Glenbow Museum's Mavericks exhibit, go this web site and follow the links.

www.ExploringNationalism.ca

Figure 14-4 The Mavericks exhibit at Calgary's Glenbow Museum showcases the lives of some of Alberta's legendary characters. One is John Ware, shown with his boarhound, Bismark, in 1891. A former slave, Ware became a rancher renowned for his skills. How might the Glenbow's decision to include Ware in the exhibit influence the way Albertans view their province's history? Their sense of identity?

## Educational Institutions

In Canada, provincial and territorial governments are responsible for education. At various levels, schools teach courses about Canadian history, culture, and identity. But many other institutions also provide information and education in these areas.

**Web Connection**

To find out more about the Dominion Institute, go to this web site and follow the links.

www.ExploringNationalism.ca

### The Dominion Institute

Founded in 1997, the Dominion Institute uses television, news and electronic media, and school programs to educate people about how Canada's history has shaped the country's identity. Remembering the past is an important part of a nation's identity. Québec's provincial motto — "Je me souviens," or "I remember" — acknowledges this concept.

At the same time, the Dominion Institute's web site notes that only one-third of eligible first-time voters cast ballots in the 2006 federal election, that two-thirds of Canadians have never heard of Vimy Ridge, and that 44 per cent of Canadians believe that D-Day marks the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

Is it important for Canadians to know about Vimy Ridge and what happened on D-Day? Explain your response.

Figure 14-5 This information banner is one of many on the Dominion Institute's web site. How many of the people in the background can you identify? Should Canadians feel pride in the achievements of these people?

### The Council of Canadians

**CheckForward**

You will read more about Maude Barlow and the Council of Canadians in Chapter 15.

Founded in 1985, the Council of Canadians is Canada's largest citizens' organization. The COC describes its mission as protecting "Canadian independence by promoting progressive policies on fair trade, clean water, energy security, public health care, and other issues of social and economic concern to Canadians." Working with a network of volunteers, the council organizes events and publishes research reports and other material to ensure that people and governments "know the kind of Canada" that Canadians want.

If you wanted to promote Canadian identity, would you choose to work with the Monarchist League, the Dominion Institute, the Council of Canadians, or another institution? Explain your reasons.

Figure 14-6 Maude Barlow, national chair of the Council of Canadians, rallies protesters outside a Canadian Medical Association meeting in 2006. At the meeting in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, the CMA was considering various moves that Barlow said would open the door to privatized health care.

## Institutions That Seek Influence

Many institutions try to influence not only government policies, but also the way policy is developed. These institutions often promote the interests of a particular group by ensuring that members' voices are heard — and that their stories become part of national myths and identity. To achieve this goal, political institutions may organize public relations campaigns, commission surveys, maintain web sites, and publish books, pamphlets, and magazines.

### Aboriginal Organizations

Aboriginal organizations such as the Assembly of First Nations and the Métis National Council, as well as regional groups such as the Métis Nation of Alberta, work with Aboriginal people across Canada. They may, for example, initiate campaigns to improve access to clean water or support traditional hunting rights. But they also promote Aboriginal perspectives and ensure that these are considered when issues of national interest are debated.

How successful do you think Aboriginal organizations have been in ensuring that their peoples' perspectives are included in Canada's national stories? Explain your judgment.

Otipemisiwak (oh-t-paym'-soo-wuk) - In Michif: The Independent Ones
Otipemisiwak
VOICE OF THE MÉTIS NATION IN ALBERTA
Alberta Métis Adopt Their Own Harvesting Laws
AGM in St. Paul, Fort Vermilion AJFR Wins 3rd Time in Row

Figure 14-7 At the web site of the Métis Nation of Alberta, you can hear the Métis national anthem and view the organization's magazine, *Otipemisiwak — Voice of MNA*. The magazine's covers often display symbols that are important to Métis identity.

### Pollsters and Think Tanks

News organizations, government agencies, and other groups often hire polling companies like Ipsos Reid, COMPAS, and The Strategic Council to provide a snapshot of Canadians' views on particular issues. The results of these surveys can affect, for example, whether a government holds an election or cuts taxes, as well as what people read about and see in the news.

In 1997, for example, the Dominion Institute asked Ipsos Reid to conduct a mock citizenship exam similar to the one immigrants must pass to become citizens — and 45 per cent of respondents failed. When the survey was repeated 10 years later, the results were even worse: 60 per cent of respondents failed, though 70 per cent of immigrants passed.

In response to this survey, the Dominion Institute recommended that high school students across Canada be required to pass a national citizenship exam as a condition of graduation. Do you think this idea would effectively promote a Canadian national identity? Explain your judgment. Should requirements for citizenship include a knowledge of Canada as well as the skills to participate in the democratic process?

In addition to polling companies, think tanks such as the Fraser Institute influence government policies and media coverage of national issues. Founded in 1974 by a group of academics and business executives, this independent research and educational institution says its goal is to redirect public attention to the role of competitive markets in meeting the needs of Canadians. It has published reports on privatizing health care and on the environment and has advocated a simpler tax system and abolishing minimum-wage rules. As a result, it is often described as a "right-wing think tank" that serves the interests of businesspeople and conservatives.

Figure 14-8 Dominion Institute–Ipsos Reid's Mock Canadian Citizenship Exam, 1997 and 2007

| Selected Questions |
|---|
| What was the main trade controlled by the Hudson's Bay Company? |
| Who is Canada's head of state? |
| Which four provinces joined together in Confederation? |
| What three oceans border Canada? |
| Name four of the five great lakes. |

Combating poverty, deprivation and exclusion is not a matter of charity, and it does not depend on how rich a country is . . .

Poverty eradication is an achievable goal. By tackling poverty as a matter of human rights obligation, the world will have a better chance of abolishing this scourge in our lifetime.

*— Louise Arbour, UN high commissioner for human rights, 2006*

There can be no patriotism without permanent opposition and criticism.

*— Hannah Arendt, writer and political philosopher, 1963*

## Economic and Commercial Institutions

Groups representing labour unions, industry associations, chambers of commerce, manufacturers, and other businesses, as well as people who are poor, also try to make their voices heard. One of the ways they do this is by appealing to a particular view of Canada. In addition, some businesses, such as the Hudson's Bay Company, are large and influential enough to be counted as institutions in themselves.

### The National Anti-Poverty Organization

Founded in 1971 by delegates of more than 250 groups, the National Anti-Poverty Organization advocates on behalf of people who are poor. NAPO was one of the first non-governmental organizations in the world to be granted the right to appear before the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and has presented evidence on how Canada has failed to live up to its international human rights obligations.

Examine the words of Louise Arbour and Hannah Arendt in "Voices." Would Arbour and Arendt defend NAPO's right to criticize Canada's human rights record? Do criticisms like those presented by NAPO make Canada stronger or weaker? Explain your response.

### The Hudson's Bay Company

Founded in 1670, the Hudson's Bay Company owned and controlled a large part of Canada until 1868. During that time, the Bay issued its own currency, made its own laws, and controlled many aspects of its employees' lives, as well as their livelihood.

Figure 14-9 Canada's wheelchair curling team won the gold medal at the 2006 Paralympics in Turin, Italy. Uniforms for both Olympic and Paralympic athletes were designed and supplied by the Bay. How might this association benefit the Bay?

The Bay's history, including stories of exploration, adventure, and greed, looms large in Canada's national myths. The Hudson's Bay blanket was one of the items traded to Aboriginal trappers for furs, and the blanket became a symbol of the company — and of Canada. The Hudson's Bay Company Archives — historical documents, artwork, photographs, and objects — are now part of Manitoba's provincial archives.

## Reflect and Respond

What visions of Canada's national identity are presented by the Monarchist League? The Mavericks exhibit at the Glenbow Museum? The Dominion Institute? The Métis National Council? The Fraser Institute? The National Anti-Poverty Organization? The Bay? What perspectives does each institution present? Prepare an e-mail message to send to each, asking three questions about its vision of Canadian identity and how the institution promotes it.

SPINBUSTER

# Identifying Spin in Commercial and Corporate Communications

The Hudson's Bay Company — the Bay — is the oldest continuously operating business in Canada and one of the oldest in the world.

In a report posted on the company's web site, Governor and Chief Executive Officer Jerry Zucker said that in his travels across Canada, he was "struck by the deep sentiment Canadians feel for Hbc . . . This report illustrates the depth and breadth of our commitment to Canada and the communities where we work and live."

Zucker also reported that the company had provided funding for 200 Canadian athletes and established a program for community heritage initiatives. As chair of HBC's History Foundation, Zucker described this as "an opportunity to embrace the collective history of this country."

## Steps to Analyzing and Interpreting Commercial or Corporate Communications

### Step 1: Question assumptions

With a partner, examine the excerpts from Zucker's report and respond to the following questions:

- If you were a corporate executive, why would you have presented this message? What message would you be sending? What loyalties would you be highlighting?
- As a potential Bay customer, how would you respond to the message? What loyalties would influence your responses? Would the message challenge or reinforce your loyalty to the Bay? To Canada?

### Step 2: Think about motives

With your partner, discuss Zucker's motives. The following questions may help focus your thinking:

- What might Zucker gain from sending this message? What might the company gain? Who else would benefit?
- What impression of the company's national identity does Zucker's message leave you with?
- What has been left out of the message? Is it possible that including this information would present a conflicting version of the company's national identity?

### Step 3: Analyze the context

With your partner, analyze how the context of Zucker's message might affect the way Canadian consumers respond to the company.

- Does the message promote aspects of Canada's national identity?
- In the context of globalization, is emphasizing the Bay's commitment to Canadian communities, athletes, and history important to Canadian consumers?

### Step 4: Be a spinbuster — look for alternative points of view and information

Jerry Zucker bought the Bay in January 2006. Zucker was a South Carolina businessperson, and some might say that the Bay's attempts to remain Canadian — by funding athletes and local history projects and promoting national symbols — are designed to attract consumers by preserving a veneer of Canadian identity.

With your partner, discuss whether this information changes your responses to the questions in Steps 1, 2, and 3. Then answer the following questions:

- Does the citizenship of a company's owner matter? Does it matter where a company's headquarters are located? Where its executives live?
- Why would Zucker have wanted to emphasize the Bay's roots as a Canadian company?
- Should profits from Canadian companies stay in Canada to provide jobs for Canadians?
- Should foreign ownership of Canadian businesses and resources be limited or controlled in some way? If so, why? If not, why not?

Compile a list of resources you might consult to conduct further research on who owns "Canadian" companies.

### Summing Up

You can use your spinbusting skill to analyze and interpret a variety of institutional messages at school and in everyday life.

# Writing for Different Purposes and Audiences

Whenever you write something — an essay, an e-mail message, a job application, or a text message — you write with a specific purpose and audience in mind. The purpose and audience determine the kind of writing required. You might, for example, write a text message to a friend one way and a letter applying for a job another way.

Jerry Zucker's message on page 329 is a good example of writing for a specific purpose and audience. Zucker wanted to assure people that the Bay remains committed to Canada — and to encourage Canadians to support the company.

The following steps will help you focus on an audience and a purpose in your own writing. You can use the same process to help you plan essays and complete other written assignments.

## Steps to Writing for Different Purposes and Audiences

### Step 1: Think about one purpose and audience

Imagine this scenario: a representative in the United States Congress has suggested in a television interview that Canada should join the United States to create one large country. He argues that Canadians are really no different from Americans and should follow the lead set by Alaska in 1867, when this territory joined the United States. You have been invited to write a guest column for the *New York Times*. You want to explain to American readers that Canadians and Americans are different and that creating one country is not a good idea.

Think about your goal. How will you persuade your audience? What information will you include in your column? Why would you include this information — what is the context? What kind of writing would be most appropriate? Use a chart like the one shown to make notes about what you will write.

| Purpose and Audience<br>Subject _____ | |
|---|---|
| Purpose | |
| Audience | |
| Content and context | |
| Writing style | |

**Step 2: Think about different audiences**

Your column has been so successful that you have been asked to present the same arguments in different formats:

- as an opinion piece in *Alberta Venture*, a magazine for Alberta businesspeople
- as a blog for your school's online student magazine
- as an article in *The Beaver*, a magazine published by Canada's National History Society

With a partner, discuss how the varying interests of these audiences might shape your writing. Record your notes on a chart like the one shown on this page.

**Step 3: Think about different purposes**

With your partner, discuss how your column would change

- if its purpose were to persuade readers that there is no difference between Canadians and Americans
- if its purpose were to persuade Americans that they are no different from Canadians and that the United States should join Canada

Compare your ideas with those of another pair.

**Step 4: Write your column**

Choose one publication and one purpose. Write a 200-word opinion piece, blog, or article on whether Canada should join the United States.

**Step 5: Compare and revise**

Compare your piece of writing with that of your partner. Use your partner's feedback to revise your piece if you wish.

**Writing for Different Audiences**

| Audience | How would the writing change to suit the audience? How would the writing remain the same? |
|---|---|
| Readers of the *Alberta Venture* | |
| Readers of your school's online magazine | |
| Readers of *The Beaver* | |

**Summing Up**

As you progress through this course and through life, you will often be called on to write for different audiences and purposes. Following steps like these will help you write more effectively.

# How can government programs and initiatives be used to promote a national identity?

Federal government programs are often used to promote national unity and a sense of Canadian identity. But they frequently spark controversy. The governor general and lieutenant-governors, for example, are symbolic heads of state who represent the British crown. Many believe that these symbols help unite Canada by reminding Canadians of the country's history, but others regard them as remnants of colonialism and believe they should be abolished.

*Should Canadian taxpayers be required to foot the bill for promoting Canadian culture?*

FYI

Although the CBC operates independently of the federal government, about two-thirds of its annual budget comes from government grants. This means that everyone in Canada contributes about $33 a year to keep the CBC operating.

## Arts and Cultural Programs

Cultural institutions are important to all peoples, and in Canada, governments support cultural industries through direct funding and by putting in place programs that encourage Canadian involvement in activities such as publishing, film and television, music, and dance.

### The CBC, NFB, and CRTC

The Broadcasting Act specifically requires the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation — the Société Radio-Canada, or CBC–Radio Canada — to "be predominantly and distinctively Canadian" and to "contribute to shared national consciousness and identity." The CBC–Radio-Canada promotes Canadian identity by broadcasting programs that all Canadians can listen to, see, and share.

The National Film Board produces films in English, French, and other languages. These films reflect Canadian points of view and perspectives and often win awards — and sometimes they arouse controversy. A 1982 NFB documentary about World War I flying ace Billy Bishop, for example, caused an uproar when it questioned some of Bishop's achievements.

The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission regulates and licenses broadcasting in Canada and requires broadcasters to meet Canadian-content quotas. This policy has helped Canadian musicians and performers, as well as TV and film producers, compete in a marketplace dominated by American media — but the need for quotas, and exactly how high they should be, remains controversial.

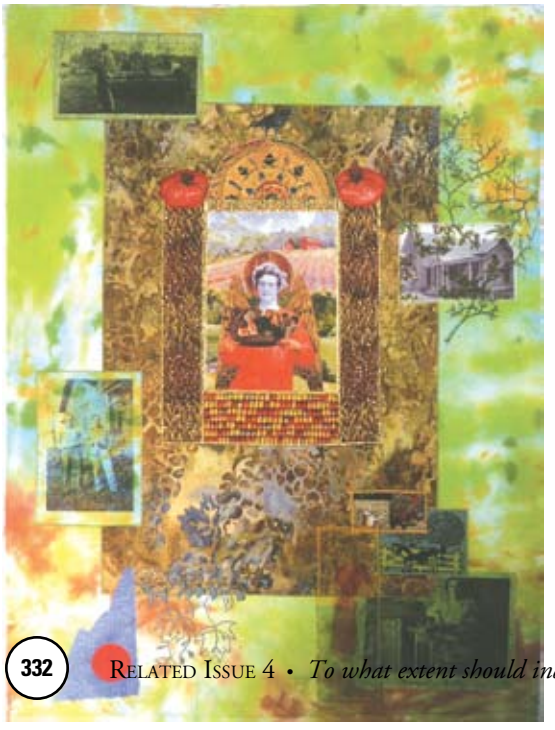


Figure 14-10 The Canadian War Museum has seven permanent galleries and also hosts special exhibitions, such as Stitches in Time, which appeared in 2008. The 15 quilts by artist Johnnene Maddison evoked the experiences of women on the home front during World War II. Can museums and art galleries contribute to national myths by mounting displays like this? Explain your response.

### National Galleries and Museums

The federal government also helps fund museums and galleries, such as the National Gallery of Canada, the Canadian Museum of Civilization, and the Canadian War Museum. All celebrate aspects of Canadian culture and identity.

The Canadian War Museum, for example, commemorates the efforts of Canadians during times of war. The museum attempts to strike a balance between building pride in military achievements and recognizing the horror of war.

## Educational Programs

Although education is a provincial and territorial responsibility, the federal government plays an indirect role by providing some funding. And in some areas, such as universities and the education of First Nations students on reserves, the federal government plays a more direct role. Providing an education to students on a reserve is a treaty obligation. At all levels of education, the federal government supports a number of programs that promote a Canadian national identity.

### Katimavik

Between 1977 and 1986, and again since 1994, the federal government has operated a program called Katimavik — an Inuktituk word that means "meeting place" — to educate Canadian youth through community involvement. The program provides 17- to 21-year-olds with a chance to travel and learn about other regions of Canada while volunteering, developing job skills, living in a group, and developing closer ties with their peers and the country. More than 25 000 young people have volunteered in more than 2000 communities across Canada.

In 2006, Katimavik conducted an assessment of the program's costs and benefits. The study found that every dollar the government spent on the program generated $2.20 in participating communities — and provided participants with opportunities to develop new friendships and personal skills, foster personal growth, and expand their outlook on life in general and toward other cultures. Both Katimavik volunteers and participating communities said they would recommend the program to friends, other communities, and businesses.

### Canada World Youth

Through the Canadian International Development Agency, the federal government also funds a program called Canada World Youth. This international intercultural program involves 17- to 24-year-old Canadian volunteers in community development exchanges with young people in other countries.

Kat Koostachin of Saskatchewan is one of 27 000 young people who have participated in this program since it was founded in 1971. Koostachin said the experience inspired her to pursue an education in international relations. "I . . . now realize how important it is for me to help my own community in Canada. I hope to do this by getting other First Nations youth involved in community work and programs," she wrote.

In 1986, the federal government suspended its funding of Katimavik but reversed this decision in 1994. Are programs like Katimavik and Canada World Youth an appropriate way to spend public money? With a partner, develop three arguments in favour of these programs and three arguments against. Include a statement about Canadian identity in at least one of your arguments.

**VOICES**

I believe Canada is stronger when our young people are encouraged to live in and learn about another region and devote their skills and energy to local communities in need.

*— Justin Trudeau, politician and son of Katimavik co-founder Pierre Trudeau, 2005*

**FYI**

Canadian historian, novelist, humorist, and travel writer Will Ferguson was a Katimavik volunteer when he was 19. At the time, he says, Katimavik paid "a dollar a day and all the granola we could eat." Ferguson went on to write and edit many books about Canadian identity, including a humorous memoir about his Katimavik experience: *I Was a Teenage Katima-Victim: A Canadian Odyssey.*

Figure 14-11 Katimavik volunteer Alistair Thomson (left) worked with these students at Palliser Heights School in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, as well as several Chinese participants in Canada World Youth, to create this window painting.

## Programs That Promote Peace, Order, and Good Government

**CheckBack**

You read about the beginnings of the French republic and nationalism in the United States in Chapter 2.

France's republic was founded on the principles of liberty, equality and brotherhood. The United States declared its independence on the basis of "self-evident truths" — people's right to equality, life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Canada's confederation, it is often said, was established to secure peace, order, and good government.

### The Royal Canadian Mounted Police

One of the first institutions established to achieve the goals of peace, order, and good government was a national police force. Founded as the North-West Mounted Police in 1873, renamed the Royal Northwest Mounted Police in 1904, and finally the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in 1920, this force provides national, federal, provincial, and even municipal policing.

The force's dress uniform — scarlet tunic, brown riding boots, jodhpurs, and wide Stetson — has become a symbol of Canada, and its Musical Ride has been widely acclaimed since its first public performance in 1901.

Figure 14-12 An RCMP officer in dress uniform stands in front of a mural depicting the Musical Ride. The Musical Ride represents the RCMP's tradition of being a "mounted" police force. Do the dress uniform and the Musical Ride reflect the reality of the Mounties' role in Canada today?

The RCMP's dress uniform has changed very little over the decades. With a partner, list at least three reasons the Mounties might have continued to use this dress uniform.

### Immigration and Security Programs

The first government bodies encountered by many visitors and immigrants to the country include Canada Customs and Revenue, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, and the Canada Border Services Agency.

The CCRA ensures that Canadians share in the costs of running the country by collecting taxes equally from everyone. Citizenship and Immigration Canada deals with matters relating to citizenship and immigration, introduces new Canadians to the country, and helps them integrate. The Canada Border Services Agency works with the RCMP, other police forces, and other Canadian government agencies, as well as international agencies, to keep Canadians safe and the borders secure.

In addition, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, which is Canada's spy service, interacts with police forces and domestic and international agencies to make the country secure from threats.

**Web Connection**

To find out more about CSIS, go to this web site and follow the links.

www.ExploringNationalism.ca

## Economic Programs

Many everyday items used by Canadians across the country, such as money and postage stamps, are provided by government programs and use symbols that promote national unity.

### The Bank of Canada and the Royal Canadian Mint

Between 1858 and 1908, Canadian coins were made in Britain. Then a branch plant of the Royal Mint was built in Ottawa to make both Canadian and British gold coins. The federal government took control of the mint in 1931 and created the Bank of Canada in 1934. The mint's coins and bills have carried symbols of Canadian identity — images of the Vimy Memorial, Canadian birds and historical figures, First Nations artworks, Olympic athletes, and Terry Fox — and spread them across the country and around the world.

Figure 14-13 The first Canadian bank notes were printed in 1935 in either French or English, depending on where they would circulate. In 1937, the bank printed the words on the bills in both languages. What does this change in policy suggest about how ideas about Canada's national identity had evolved?

### Advertising and Sponsorship

Publicly funded Canada Day celebrations are one way the federal government promotes Canadian identity and unity. A government-run organization called the National Committee helps communities organize and pay for Canada Day celebrations. Since 1985, every province and territory has had a committee that uses federal grants to help co-ordinate these celebrations.

Members of Parliament often hand out flags and maple leaf pins to constituents, and in 1996, the government sponsored what it called the One in a Million National Flag Challenge. The plan was to distribute a million flags to Canadians, who would fly them on Flag Day in 1997. The program cost $15.5 million, or about 50 cents for every Canadian.

Sponsoring athletes — at the Olympic, Paralympic, and Commonwealth Games, for example — and celebrating their achievements is another way the federal government promotes Canada at home and abroad.

**FYI**

When the Canadian Football League was in financial trouble in the late 1990s, the federal government provided funding to place a sticker of the Canadian flag on every player's helmet. Some Canadians complained that the government was bailing out privately owned sports teams. Others said that the government was simply paying for advertising.

### Reflect and Respond

Part of the challenge of developing a program to promote a national identity can lie in promoting the program itself. Sometimes it needs broader coverage; other times, the coverage needs to be more tightly focused.

Choose one program, such as Katimavik or sponsoring Paralympic athletes, and work with a partner to develop a promotional campaign aimed at raising the program's profile among high school students across Canada. What arguments would you use to persuade the government that funding your campaign is worthwhile? What methods of advertising and communication would you use? Would you develop a new logo or symbol? What stories would you convey? Work with a partner to map out your campaign, then present and explain your ideas to the class.

# How can individuals promote a national identity?

When Canada's unity was threatened by the Québec referendum in 1995, Jowi Taylor was inspired to create the Six String Nation guitar. Taylor's action is an example of how individuals can play an active role in promoting national identity.

Musicians, painters, writers, and others have often used symbols of Canada and drawn on national myths for inspiration. In the process, they have sometimes added new symbols and myths to Canada's story. Many Canadian backpackers, for example, sport Canadian flags on their packs, a strategy that proclaims their sense of identity as they travel the world.

VOICES

Oh! The good old hockey game,
Is the best game you can name;
And the best game you can name,
Is the good old hockey game!

*— Stompin' Tom Connors, "The Hockey Song," 1971*

## Musicians and Artists

Stompin' Tom Connors has travelled all over Canada, singing his distinctly Canadian songs about hockey, football, soldiers, snowmobiles, sasquatches, and Bud the PEI spud. His most famous composition, "The Hockey Song," has even been called a national anthem.

Jazz pianist Oscar Peterson recognized in the 1960s that being Canadian brought a different note to his chosen form. His *Canadiana Suite*, written in 1964, moves from Eastern to Western Canada, with compositions inspired by the country's regions. Peterson's own favourite was "Wheatland," reflecting the Canadian Prairies.

Roch Carrier is a novelist, playwright, and children's writer whose stories are enjoyed by Francophones and anglophones alike. A quotation from his famous story *The Hockey Sweater* is found on the back of Canada's $5 dollar bill. And award-winning folksinger and actor Tom Jackson, a member of the Cree Nation who grew up on the One Arrow Reserve in Saskatchewan, is also the founder of a concert series that raises money for food banks.

In the 1920s, the Group of Seven painters set out to explore and paint the Canadian landscape in a different way from artists who had been heavily influenced by European tastes and traditions. These painters — and others, such as Emily Carr — created images that reflected their feelings about their country, and their works have come to represent Canada.

VOICES

My profession has taken me to every part of the world, none of them more beautiful than where I live. As a musician, I respond to the harmony and rhythm of life, and when I'm deeply moved it leaves something singing inside me. With a country as large and as full of contrast as Canada, I had a lot of themes to choose from when I wrote the *Canadiana Suite*. This is my musical portrait of the Canada I love.

*— Oscar Peterson, musician and composer, 1997*

Figure 14-14 Jazz musician Oscar Peterson received the Order of Canada in 1973. He was widely acclaimed as an ambassador of Canada and for bringing Canadian culture to the world — and vice versa.

Today, Aboriginal artists like Kent Monkman, a member of the Fisher River Band of Manitoba, often use their art to promote their people's identity. Monkman has written that the reality of Aboriginal peoples was often "painted out of the narratives" created by other artists. "It's worth examining that whole period of art, so purely one-sided, like a big cover-up of what was really happening," he told *The Walrus* magazine. "I try to approach it with humour, focusing on the side of the art culture that is about survival and being able to adapt, and to look forward. It's a very gentle way of making people aware of this huge obliteration of our narratives."

## Athletes and Roving Ambassadors

Government and corporate funding has helped many athletes compete for Canada at all levels of sports. But the dedication and sacrifice of their families, coaches, and other individuals is also invaluable.

Wayne Gretzky's father, Walter, helped his young son hone his skills by building what has been called the most famous backyard hockey rink in the world. And when figure skater Jeffrey Buttle won the world championship in 2008, it was another milestone in a career that began when his mother put him on the ice for the first time at the age of two. Lesley Buttle, says she'll happily "share him with Canada . . . Of course, it would have been nice to share him when it was time to drive all those miles at 5 a.m. But no one's around to share that, only parents."

Whenever people put a flag of their country or an emblem of their school on their backpack, wear a T-shirt that says they are Albertan or Sri Lankan, or drive out of the province in a car with Alberta licence plates, they display where they are from.

Figure 14-15 Lesley Buttle (left) helps her son, Jeffrey, hold up the gold medal he won at the 2008 World Figure Skating Championship in Göteborg, Sweden.

## Taking Turns

### Is promoting national identity my responsibility?

The students responding to this question are Violet, who is a member of the Paddle Prairie Métis Settlement; Blair, who lives in Edmonton and whose heritage is Ukrainian, Scottish, and German; and Jane, who lives in Calgary and is descended from black Loyalists who fled to Nova Scotia after the American Revolution.

Violet

I don't need to advertise that I'm Canadian. I don't put flag stickers all over my locker or binders like some kids I know. I'm glad I'm Canadian, but, to be specific, I'm Métis. That's what I tell others I am, because I think this identity is special. I think individuals should promote their own cultures. By showing that you're Métis or Inuit or Québécois or Anglo-Canadian, you're also promoting Canada's multicultural identity.

I definitely think it's my responsibility to promote my identity as a Canadian. I have a Team Canada hockey sweater that I wear a lot. When I wear it, I feel more connected to other Canadians. People smile at me — we seem to have something in common. I also love Canada Day! Every July 1st, I hang a huge flag off our apartment balcony and go down to the park to watch fireworks.This country could use more Canadian spirit. We're all Canadian — let's be proud of that.

Blair

Jane

I do think I'm responsible for promoting a national identity, but that identity doesn't have to buy into national symbols and myths. A lot of these symbols don't accurately portray Canadians today. I'm interested in rewriting these myths by looking at where people come from, because that's what makes you who you are. Your individual experience shapes you as a person, and it also shapes what you can do for your nation. If we start by examining our histories, we can get together and share our experiences. These would be truly Canadian experiences that might end up creating a new set of symbols and myths.

## Your Turn

How would you respond to the question Violet, Blair, and Jane are answering? Have you ever done something to promote your Canadian identity? What would you consider doing in the future? Explain your responses.

## The Greatest Canadians

Pierre Berton wrote 50 books for adults and 22 for children. Many of his works examined the myths and realities of Canada's history and identity. Among his most popular books were histories of the Canadian Pacific Railway, the Klondike, the Great Depression, and the exploration of Canada's North.

Berton was also a television personality and wrote scores of articles, columns, and essays. In many ways, he became as recognizable as some of his subjects. When Berton died in 2004, Mel Hurtig, author, activist, and original publisher of *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, said: "[Berton] hated what he called anti-Canadians — people who put Canadians down and people who weren't proud of their country. I loved him for that."

In 2004, CBC TV asked viewers, "Who is the greatest Canadian?" Viewers nominated 140 000 people, and the debate raged until the top 10 were chosen and a final selection was made. The results are shown in "FYI."

Analyze the list of Canadians in "FYI." What elements of Canadian identity does this list represent? What elements of Canadian identity are missing from this list? Does this list fairly represent Canada? If so, explain how. If not, explain why not. What names would you add to this list? Why would you add them? Who would you delete to make room for them? Explain your choices.

**Web Connection**

To find out more about CBC's *Greatest Canadian* series, go to this web site and follow the links.

www.ExploringNationalism.ca

**FYI**

**The CBC's Top 10 Greatest Canadians**

1. Tommy Douglas
2. Terry Fox
3. Pierre Elliott Trudeau
4. Frederick Banting
5. David Suzuki
6. Lester B. Pearson
7. Don Cherry
8. John A. Macdonald
9. Alexander Graham Bell
10. Wayne Gretzky

Figure 14-16 The photograph at top right shows former NDP leader Tommy Douglas, whose efforts to bring pubic health care to Canada earned him recognition as the greatest Canadian in a 2004 CBC contest. In the photograph at left, Pierre Berton sits on CPR Engine 148 during the making of *The National Dream*, a TV series in which Berton narrated the story of how the railway was built.

# THE VIEW FROM HERE

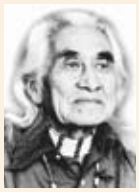
To many people, the land, and especially natural areas, are core elements of Canadian identity. But as Canadians become more and more urbanized, will they stop identifying with the outdoors? Here is how three people have responded to this question.

**James Outram** was a mountain climber and writer who described his impression of the Canadian Rockies in 1906.

> There is a wonderful fascination about mountains. Their massive grandeur, majesty of lofty height, splendour of striking outline – crag and pinnacle and precipice – seem to appeal both to the intellect and to the inmost soul of man, and to compel a mingled reverence and love . . . in Canada there still exists that chiefest charm of novelty and adventure, the thrill of climbing virgin peaks, of traversing untrodden valleys, of viewing regions never seen before by human eyes.

**Peter C. Newman** is a journalist and historian. In *The Canadian Revolution: From Deference to Defiance*, he talks about how contemporary technology has affected Canadians' traditional relationship with the land.

> Land-as-Identity became an accepted axiom, with territorial integrity becoming the country's strongest sustaining myth. The trouble with having a national identity defined as an offshoot of nature is that it had so little to do with the Darwinian ethic of the 1980s. For the dwellers in the global village, circa 1995, the new frontier was the electronic territory known as cyberspace. Instead of being the defining element of the country, land had become a mere backdrop to other events. Yet another once-reliable touchstone of the past had vanished.



Chief **Dan George** of the Salish Nation was born in British Columbia and dedicated his life to explaining and sharing his culture with others. A writer and poet, he also acted in movies and television shows. In his poem "My Heart Soars," he described his emotional attachment to the natural environment.

> The beauty of the trees,
> the softness of the air,
> the fragrance of the grass,
> speaks to me.
>
> The summit of the mountain,
> the thunder of the sky,
> the rhythm of the sea,
> speaks to me.
>
> The faintness of the stars,
> the freshness of the morning,
> the dew drop on the flower,
> speaks to me.
>
> The strength of fire,
> the taste of salmon,
> the trail of the sun,
> And the life that never goes away,
> They speak to me.
>
> And my heart soars.

## Explorations

1. What theme links the words of all three writers? Does this theme reflect your ideas about Canadian identity?
2. Do you agree with Peter C. Newman that a touchstone of the Canadian past has vanished? Is this a positive or negative development? Has anything been gained in return? Explain your responses.

1. Choose an institution or government program and work with a small group to develop criteria and a checklist for judging its effectiveness in promoting Canadian identity.

   Your criteria should reflect the aspects of the program that your group finds important and measurable and should help you determine whether the program or institution is achieving its objectives. You may consider, for example, its costs (Is the program cost-effective?) or its profile (Do people know enough about the program? Is the program well-known for the wrong reasons?). Your checklist may look like the one shown on this page.

   Compare your checklist and criteria with those of two other groups. As a result of this discussion, you may wish to revise your checklist.

2. Use the checklist and criteria you developed in response to Question 1 to rate another program or initiative designed to promote an identity. The initiative may be a government program; a commercial advertising campaign; a project to boost school spirit; an event in your community; a celebrity's web site; a new CD release; or a person, place, or event of your choosing. Be prepared to present — and defend — your ratings to the class.

   Write a statement commenting on how effectively the criteria you developed for Question 1 fit your assignment for Question 2. What conclusion(s) can you draw as a result?

3. Work with a partner to create an outline for a documentary film. Your outline can take the form of either a computer software presentation or a storyboard.

   The documentary will focus on your community's identity — on what makes it different or special, in a positive or a not-so-positive way. The goal of the film is to portray your community as you see it — the identity you want to present to the larger world.

   In your outline, explore some of the community's history and stories from its early days. Why is your community located where it is? What tales give the community its richness and character? What people should you interview? What places should you mention? What events should you recount?

   As you work on your outline, keep a journal describing your thoughts on how you chose the images and created the storyline. This journal will form the basis for your documentary's voice-over narration.

**Program** _____

| Criteria | Information | Evaluation (1 = not very effective; 5 = highly effective) |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

4. Develop a survey to find out what people think about a specific aspect of Canadian identity. You may decide, for example, to choose sports. Your survey might ask respondents to rank a list of sports in order of their importance to Canadian identity, then respond to questions and statements like the following:
   - Do you believe that one of these sports symbolizes Canada? Which one?
   - Do you believe that other Canadians would agree with you?
   - On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 = not important; 10 = extremely important), assess the importance of promoting the sport nationally.

   Your survey should include at least five questions. Ask 10 people — classmates, family members, friends, your teachers — to complete the survey.

   Prepare a summary paragraph explaining how and why you chose your focus and describing your findings. If your survey lends itself to mathematical analysis, you may wish to present the data as a graph that shows the responses as percentages.

5. Write a brief essay in response to this question: Should the government be in the business of promoting Canada to Canadians and the world at large?

   Your opening paragraph should clearly state your position and indicate why you hold it. The middle paragraphs should clearly explain why and how you reached your informed position. To illustrate your arguments, use examples from *Exploring Nationalism*, from other material you have read, and from research you conduct. The final paragraph should sum up your ideas and restate your position.

6. In his 1964 book *Rivers of Canada*, Canadian author Hugh MacLennan wrote:

   > The rivers of Canada are still there, and their appearance and character have changed little or not at all in the last century and a half. It is only our use of them that has altered. Now we fly over them, build dams on them, fish in them for sport, use them for municipal water supplies, and some of them we have poisoned with sewage and industrial effluents . . . But the rivers are as worth knowing as they ever were, though none of us will know them as the voyageurs did.

   Québec City–born Joseph Légaré was one of the first Canadian artists to start developing a distinctively Canadian style. He painted *Les Cascades de la Rivière Saint-Charles à la Jeune-Lorette* in about 1832. His depiction of the falls on the St. Charles River illustrates his love for the rivers of Canada.

   Either paraphrase MacLennan's thoughts or paint a word picture describing Légaré's painting. In your statement, explain how Canada's rivers function as a symbol of national identity.

## Think about Your Challenge

By now, you have recorded a number of entries in the journal you are keeping in response to the related-issue question: To what extent should individuals and groups in Canada embrace a national identity?

It is time to start thinking about how this question relates to the course-issue question: To what extent should we embrace nationalism? If you embrace a national identity, are you automatically embracing nationalism? Can you embrace one without embracing the other? Discuss this conundrum with a partner, a small group, or the class.

In your journal, record what you think will be your starting position in the four-corners debate that is the related-issue challenge. Record notes on at least two arguments you will make to support your position.